NUMB. CCX.

The SPECTATOR.

Nescio quomodo inhæret in mentibus quasi seculorum quoddam augurium futurorum; idque in maximis ingeniis altissimisque animis & existit maxime & apparet facillime.
Cic. Tusc. Quæst.

Wednesday, October 31. 1711.

To the SPECTATOR.

SIR,

I am fully perswaded that one of the best Springs of generous and worthy Actions, is the having generous and worthy Thoughts of our selves. Whoever has a mean Opinion of the Dignity of his Nature, will in no higher a Rank than he has allotted himself in his own Estimation: If he considers his Years circumscribed by the uncertain Term of a few Years, his Designs will be contracted into the narrow Span he imagines is to bound his Existence. How can he exalt his Thoughts to any thing great and noble, who only believes that, after a short Turn on the Stage of this World, he shall sink into Oblivion, and to lose his Consciousness for ever?

For this Reason I am of Opinion, that so pleasing and elevated a Contemplation as that of the Soul's *Immortality* cannnt be resum'd too often. There is not a more improving Exercise to the human Mind, than to be frequently reviewing its own great Privileges and Endowments; nor a more effectual Means to awaken in us an Ambition to tower above low Objects and little Pursuits, than to assure our selves as Heirs of Eternity.

It is a very great Satisfaction to consider the wisest and wisest of Mankind in all Nations and Ages asserting, as with one Voice, this their undoubted Birthright, and to find it ratify'd by an express Revelation. At the same time, if we turn our Thoughts inward upon our selves, we may meet with a kind of secret Sense concurring with the Proofs of our own Immortality.

You have in my Opinion rais'd a good presumptive Argument from the encreasing Appetite the Mind has to Knowledge, and to the extending its own Faculties, which cannot be accomplish'd, as the more restrain'd Perfection of lower Creatures may, in the Limits of a short Life. I think another probable Conjecture may be rais'd from our Appetite to Duration it self, and from a Reflection on our Progress thro' the several Stages of it: *We are complaining*, as you observe in a former Speculation, *of the Shortness of Life, and yet are perpetually hurrying over the Parts of it, to arrive at certain little Settlements or imaginary Points of Rest which are dispersed up and down in it.*

'Now let us consider what happens to us when we arrive at these *imaginary Points of Rest*. Do we stop our Motion, and sit down satisfy'd in the Settlement we have gain'd? or are we not removing the Boundary, and marking out new Points of Rest, to which we press forward with the like Eagerness, and which cease to be such as fast as we attain them. Our Case is like that of a Traveller upon the *Alps*, who shou'd fancy that the Top of the next Hill must end his Journey because it terminates his Prospect; but he no sooner arrives at it than he sees new Ground and other Hills beyond it, and continues to travel on as before.

'This is so plainly every Man's Condition in Life, that there is no one who has observ'd any thing but may observe, that as fast as his Time wears away, his Appetite to something future remains. The Use therefore I wou'd make of it is this, that since Nature (as some love to express it) does nothing in vain, or, to speak properly, since the Author of our Being has planted no wandering Passion in it, no Desire which has not its Object, Futurity is the proper Object of the Passion so constantly exercis'd about it; and this Restlessness in the present, this assigning our selves over to farther Stages of Duration, this successive grasping at somewhat still to come, appears to me (whatever it may to others) as a kind of Instinct or natural Symptom which the Mind of Man has of its own Immortality.

'I take it at the same time for granted, that the Immortality of the Soul is sufficiently established by other Arguments; and if so, this Appetite, which otherwise wou'd be very unaccountable and absurd, seems very reasonable, and adds Strength to the Conclusion. But I am amazed when I consider there are Creatures capable of Thought, who, in spight of every Argument, can form to themselves a sullen Satisfaction in thinking otherwise. There is something so pitifully mean in the inverted Ambition of that Man who can hope for Annihilation, and please him-

'self

'self to think that his whole Fabrick shall one 'Day crumble into Dust, and mix with the Mass 'of inanimate Beings, that it equallly deserves our 'Admiration and Pity. The Mistery of such 'Mens Unbelief is not hard to be penetrated; and 'indeed amounts to nothing more than a sordid 'Hope, that they shall not be immortal because 'they dare not be so.

'This brings me back to my first Observation, and 'gives me Occasion to say further, that as worthy 'Actions spring from worthy Thoughts, so worthy 'Thoughts are likewise the Consequence of worthy 'Actions: But the Wretch who has degraded him-'self below the Character of Immortality, is very 'willing to resign his Pretensions to it, and to sub-'stitute in its Room a dark negative Happiness in 'the Extinction of his Being.

'The admirable *Shakespear* has given us a strong 'Image of the unsupported Condition of such a 'Person in his last Minutes, in the second Part of 'King *Henry* the Sixth, where Cardinal *Beaufort*, 'who had been concern'd in the Murder of the 'good Duke *Humphrey*, is represented on his Death-'Bed. After some short confus'd Speeches, which 'shew an Imagination disturb'd with Guilt, just as 'he is expiring, King *Henry* standing by him full of 'Compassion, says,

Lord Cardinal! if thou think'st on Heaven's Bliss
Hold up thy Hand, make Signal of that Hope!
He dies, and makes no Sign!——

'The Despair which is here shewn, without a 'Word or Action on the Part of the dying Person, 'is beyond what cou'd be painted by the most forci-'ble Expressions whatever.

'I shall not pursue this Thought further, but 'only add, that as Annihilation is not to be had 'with a Wish, so it is the most abject thing in the 'World to wish it. What are Honour, Fame, 'Wealth, or Power, when compared with the ge-'nerous Expectation of a Being without End, and 'a Happiness adequate to that Being?

'I shall trouble you no further; but, with a cer-'tain Gravity which these Thoughts have given 'me, I reflect upon some things People say of 'you, (as they will of all Men who distinguish 'themselves) which I hope are not true; and wish 'you as good a Man as you are an Author.

I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

T. D.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, this present Wednesday, being the 31st Day of October, will be presented, a Comedy call'd, Rule a Wife and have a Wife: Written by Beaumont and Fletcher. The Part of Leon by Mr. Powell, the Copper Captain by Mr. Wilks, Elfridania by Mrs. Oldfield, Duke by Mr. Husband, Don Juan by Mr. Thurmond, Cacafogo by Mr. Bullock, Margaretta by Mrs. Knight, Altea by Mrs. Bicknell, Old-Woman by Mr. Norris.

This Play is sold by Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's-Head, over against Katherine-Street in the Strand.

PROPOSALS for Graving and Printing the Gallery of RAPHAEL, at Hampton-Court.

IT being universally allowed, that the Cartoons in the said Gallery are the most valuable Set of portable Pictures in the World, and Her Majesty having been graciously pleased by Her Royal Licence to Signior Nicola Dorigny (lately arrived from Rome) for copying and graving the same, the said Signior Dorigny proposeth as follows. 1. That the said Work shall consist of nine Plates, (viz.) one after each of the seven Cartoones, and one as a Frontispiece to the Whole, containing the Dedication, with proper Ornaments. 2. That every Plate shall be about nineteen Inches high, four of them about thirty Inches long, and the other about twenty five Inches, in Proportion to their respective Originals, and all of them printed upon the largest and very best Paper. 3. That the Subscribers shall pay no more than four Guineas for a Set, whereof one Guinea to be paid in Hand, and the Remainder on the Delivery of the said Work compleat. 4. The said Signior Dorigny doth oblige himself never to sell them to any Person who is not a Subscriber under five Guineas. By the modest Price of this Work, it is hoped that all Lovers of Art will be satisfied the Undertaker aims at Reputation rather than Profit by it; the Prints of the Battles, &c. of Alexander after Le Brun (but five in Number, and the original Paintings much inferiour to those of Raphael) are frequently sold for twenty Guineas. How well qualified the said Signior Dorigny is to perform his Part, is humbly submitted to the Judgment of those of the Nobility Gentry of this Nation, who having seen the things that he has done (for twenty Years past) after Raphael and other the most celebrated Masters in Rome, have invited him hither, and are pleased to encourage him in this noble Undertaking. Subscriptions are taken by Signior Dorigny, at the Golden Head in the Little Piazza, Covent-Garden; at St. James's Coffee-House in St. James's-Street, Young Man's Coffee-House at Charing-Cross; Mr. Cooper's, a Printseller, at the Three Pidgeons in Half-Moon-Street over-against the New-Exchange in the Strand; Mr. Charles Lillie, a Perfumer, at the Corner of Beaufort-Buildings in the Strand; Mr. Charles Mather's, a Printshop, near Temple-Bar; Mr. Dighton's, Her Majesty's Perfumer, at the City of Seville over-against the Inner-Temple Gate; and at Mr. Penkethman's, a Toy shop, opposite to Garraway's Coffee-House in Exchange-Alley.

Wines to be sold by Retail.

Excellent Red and White Port, and Red and White Lisbon, being neat Wines as they came from the Growth the best Growth in Portugal. To be sold by the Importer in Arabant-Court in Philpot-Lane, viz. Red and White Port at 9s. per Gallon, or 14l. per Hhd. Red and White Lisbon at 5s. 6d. per Gallon, or 16l. per Hhd. Attendance will be given every Day.

At the Lace-Chamber on Ludgate-Hill, kept by Mary Parsons, is a great Quantity of Flanders Lace, lately come over, to be sold off at great Pennyworths by Wholesale or Retail. She bought them there her self.

To Morrow will be published,

The English Grammar: Or, An Essay on the Art of Grammar: Applied to and exemplified in the English Tongue. By Michael Maittaire. Printed for Henry Clements at the Half-Moon in St. Paul's Church-yard.

Just Publish'd,

Anguis in Herba: or, The fatal Consequences of a Treaty with France, wherein it is proved, 1. That the Peace whereby the French King governs himself, will not allow him to observe any Treaty longer than it is for his Interest to break it. 2. That he has always aimed at the Union of the two Crowns of France and Spain since the Pyrenean Treaty. 3. That notwithstanding his Pretences to the contrary, such is his Design at this Day. 4. That no Power can prevent it, but to reduce his Power to such a Degree as may effectly break his Measures. Sold by A. Baldwin in Warwick-Lane. Price 6 d.

Just Publish'd,

Armageddon: Or, The Necessity of carrying on the War, if such a Peace cannot be obtained as may render Europe safe, and Trade secure. Sold by J. Baker in Peter-Row. Price 6 d. Where may be had the third Edition of, Reasons why the Nation ought to put a speedy End to this expensive War, &c. Price 6 d. And the second Edition of, An Essay on the South Sea Trade. Price 6 d.

A Collection of State Tracts, published on Occasion of the late Revolution in 1688. and during the Reign of King William III. In 3 Volumes, Folio: Many of them written by the greatest Hands, and fit to be consulted at this time, in order to form a right Judgment as to Treaties with France, War, and Peace, the Resistance us'd at the Revolution, the Succession in the House of Hanover, and other weighty Subjects. Sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster. N. B. One of the Tracts in the last Volume, called Anguis in Herba; or, the fatal Consequences of a Treaty with France, will be published by it self in a few Days.

LONDON: Printed for *Sam. Buckley*, at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertisements are taken in; as also by *Charles Lillie*, Perfumer at the Corner of *Beaufort-Buildings* in the *Strand*.